

# NRCS **NEWS RELEASE**

United States Department of Agriculture • Natural Resources Conservation Service

## **Massachusetts State Office**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **USDA Honors Two Valley Men with Highest Award**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Chief Bruce Knight recently honored NRCS employees Joseph K. Bagdon of **Sunderland** and Eric S. Hesketh of **Deerfield** for outstanding performance in the 57<sup>th</sup> annual U.S. Department of Agriculture Honor Awards Program. These national awards are the most prestigious honors presented by the Secretary of Agriculture.

Bagdon and Hesketh were recognized for outstanding performance in the design, development and delivery of the "Nutrient and Pest Management Considerations in Conservation Planning" training program for agricultural non-point source pollution reduction. As a result of this program, over 3000 federal and private conservationists representing 50 states and five territories have received training within the past two years.

"The Honor Awards are a tribute to our employees for their commitment to doing the best job possible and serving local communities," Knight said. "The NRCS workforce is dedicated to conservation and excellence in public service."

"I am very pleased, yet not surprised, that Joe and Eric were selected for this important award," said Cecil B. Currin, NRCS State Conservationist for Massachusetts. "They have spearheaded some truly groundbreaking projects."

USDA Honor Award winners have demonstrated exemplary service and outstanding achievements in many fields, including maintaining and enhancing the nation's natural resources and environment; enhancing the capacity of all rural residents, communities and businesses to prosper; operating an efficient, effective and discrimination-free organization; and heroism and emergence response.

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